

of his next-door neighbor. His missing shoe was nowhere to be seen.

Nicholson had a spare pair of shoes in his bag, and he put them on. Then he stood staring in perplexity at what lay before his eyes. Boots must have made a hideous blunder. Nicholson went down to pick a quarrel with him. But Boots was nowhere to be found. And, as Nicholson munched his breakfast, a telegram was put into his hand.

"Meet me at Coventry at four," it ran. It was from the friend who was to guide him through the maze of sociological observations that lay before him.

There was only one train to Coventry that day—Sunday. Forgotten was the episode of the morning, forgotten Miss Martin, save that she lay like a subconscious idea at the base of his memory. He rushed upstairs to find Boots standing before his door with his suitcase in his hand.

"It's all packed, sir," he said. "There isn't no time to lose, sir. I've called a keb, sir."

What was it he wanted to say to Boots? Boots had already disappeared with the suitcase. He was waiting at the cab door. He thrust the suitcase inside, and, gratified by another tip, departed, while the cab dashed frantically toward the station.

Nicholson sank back against the cushions. Well, of course, Boots had rectified the blunder. No doubt he had located the odd shoes, returned them to their places, and—but had he? Nicholson opened the bag and looked inside. There lay the dreadful evidence of his theft—Miss Martin's high-heeled shoe, beside his own!

Nicholson gasped. Well, nothing could be done now. He resolved to send the shoe back that night with a letter of apology. He thrust his suitcase across the baggage counter, received his check, and dashed into the train.

His friend was waiting for him at the other end, but there was no suitcase.

"I checked it," said Nicholson. "I thought it would come on the same train."

"You what?" asked the other.

"Checked it," answered Nicholson, displaying the stub.

"I don't know what you mean by 'checking it,'" replied his friend. "If you had a guard put your bag into the baggage-van it must have come. Why—good heavens, man, don't you see that you left it at the parcels room? It's waiting for you there, no doubt, and it will cost you two pence a day until you get it."

Bewildered and disgusted, Nicholson suffered himself to be draped off to his friend's house. He bought an outfit and determined to return via Oxford when he concluded his round of visits. And in the enthusiasm of the night's meeting he almost forgot his troubles.

The following morning he saw this advertisement in the Coventry papers:

"If the gentleman who took away a lady's shoe from the Queen's Hotel, Oxford, will return it to its owner, no questions will be asked. Address M. M., Leicester. Reward if required."

Leicester was Nicholson's last stopping place. He resolved to explain by letter and arrange to meet Miss Martin there. Meanwhile his friend told him that it would be possible to have the bag forwarded to the station there. Accordingly Nicholson wrote an apologetic letter to the poste restante, and then continued his journey.

Four days later he descended at Leicester station. At the post office he found a communication from Miss Martin.

"Miss Martin will be glad to see Mr. Nicholson at the Temperance Hotel, provided he brings her shoe with him."

Nicholson found the missing suitcase, slung it into a cab and hurried to the hotel. Miss Martin came into the parlor.